Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LAGOS 07367 011736Z

51
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 AID-05 OPIC-03 EB-07 COME-00

TRSE-00 CIEP-01 DOTE-00 /075 W
---------- 040869
O R 011610Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 493
DIA WASHDC
USIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMCONSUL DOUALA
AMCONSUL KADUNA
AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7367

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, NI
SUBJECT: APPRAISAL OF BRIGADIER MOHAMMED'S JULY 30 AND
31 TV APPEARANCES AND HIS INITIAL MOVES AS HEAD
OF STATE

REF: LAGOS 7254

SUMMARY: WITH HIS BROADCAST TO THE NATION JULY 30 AND HIS
REMARKS JULY 31 AT THE SWEARING-IN OF NEW GOVERNORS, BRIG.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LAGOS 07367 011736Z

MURTALA MOHAMMED TURNED A CRISP, NEW PAGE IN HIS CAREER.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

HIS PRESENTATIONS WERE BRIEF AND DECISIVE, DEALING IN A
POSITIVE WAY WITH VARIOUS OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE
BESET THE GOWON GOVERNMENT AND ESTABLISHING A REMARKABLY
CONSTRUCTIVE TONE. HE REASSURED FOREIGN INVESTORS AND LEFT
THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT HIS WILL BE A GOVERNMENT OF DOERS,
PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, LEAVING FOREIGN
AFFAIRS IN THE BACK SEAT FOR THE TIME BEING. THE REAL TEST
WILL COME WHEM MOHAMMED, ESSENTIALLY AN IMPATIENT, DRIVING,
RUTHLESS MAN, COMES UP AGAINST PROBLEMS WHICH CAN NOT BE
SOLVED BY THE NUMBERS. FRUSTRITION COULD EVEN ENCOURAGE
A HARSHER OUTLOOK AND A SEARCH FOR SCAPEGOATS, WITH ATTENDANT
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LONG-TERM POLICIES, SUPPORT AND STABILITY
OF THE REGIME. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NEW HEAD OF STATE AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED
FORCES, BRIG. MURTALA MOHAMMED, MADE A POSITIVE IMPRESSION
WITH HIS FIRST TWO PUBLIC APPEARANCES ON TELEVISION. HIS
MANNER WAS STRAIGHTFORWARD, BUSINESS-LIKE, DEVOID OF POSTURING
OR EXCESSIVE RECRIMINATIONS, AND HIS DELIVERY WAS STRONG
AND ASSURED. HIS GENERAOUS TREATMENT OF GOWON AND OTHER
FORMER FMG LEADERS GAVE AN IMPRESSION OF STATESMAN-LIKE
RESTRAINT AND HELPED DEFUSE THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMEDIATE
CHALLENGE TO HIS ASSUMPTION OF POWER. THIS HAS BEEN REINFORCED
BY GOWON'S ACCEPTANCE OF THIS OWN FATE AND DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN
NIGERIA.

2. MOHAMMED'S JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE COUP WAS STRIKINGLY
GENERAL AND EVEN VAGUE, CONSISTING ESSENTIALLY OF REFERENCES
TO " LACK OF CONSULTATION, INDECISION, INDISCIPLINE AND EVEN
NEGLECT", AND TO GOWON'S INACCESSIBILITY AND REJECTION OF
ADVICE, INCLUDING ADVICE FROM TRADITIONAL RULERS AND
INTELLECTUALS. MOHMMMED'S REFERENCE IN BOTH SPEECHES TO THE
LACK OF RESPECT AND ATTENTION TO TRADITIONAL RULERS APPEARS
TO REFLECT THE NORTHERN VIEWPOINT, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE INDEED
OBAS AND OTHER TRADITIONAL RULERS IN THE WEST (AND SOUTH).
IN HIS REMARKS, MOHAMMED CAPITALIZED EFFECTIVELY ON GOWON'S
PREVIOUS DIFFICULTIES AND HESITATIONS IN A NUMBER OF AREAS.
A. MOHAMMED'S CLEAN SWEEP OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT LEADERS
AND GOVERNORS OF THE TWELVE STATES GAVE AN IMPRESSION OF
STRENGTH AND DECISIVENESS AND WILL APPEAL TO MANY WHO FEEL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LAGOS 07367 011736Z

THE OLD LEADERS HAD LONG OVERSTAYED
THEIR TIME.
B. REMOVAL OF MAJOR-GENERALS OR EQUIVALENT GOT RID OF
ADEBAYO, WHO HAD BEEN ON THE ROLLS BUT UNEMPLOYED FOR
LAST THREE YEARS; EJOOR, WHO THOUGH COMPETENT LACKED RESPECT
OF FELLOW OFFICERS; EKPO AND KAM-SALEM, WHO WERE BOTH AILING;
AND WEY, WHO WAS GRANDFATHERLY FIGURE-HEAD.
C. REMOVAL OF MAJOR-GENERAL HASSAN KATSINA, ON THE OTHER

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

HAND, IS MORE ENIGMATIC, AS HE WAS MUCH RUMORED TO BE
CLOSELY ASSOCIATED
WITH THE COUP. WE WOULD NOT RULE HIM
OUT AS A POSSIBLE OR POTENTIAL EMINENCE GRISE.
D. MOHAMMED'S ACCUSATION OF CORRUPTION AND MISUSE OF
OFFICE BY TOP OFFICIAL SOF THE GOWON GOVERNMENT WAS OF COURSE
JUSTIFIED, AND HIS CALL FOR PROBITY AND OPENNESS TO CONSTRUCTIVE
OPINION WILL BE WIDELY WELCOMED, THOUGH PERHAPS WITH
SOME SECPTICISM.
E. POSTPONEMENT OF FESTAC WAS OBVIOUS, EASY AND WILL BE
POPULAR IN MANY QUARTERR WHERE THE FESTIVAL HAS BEEN
CRITICIZED AS GRANDIOUS, BADLY PREPARED, EXPENSIVE AND
RIDDLED WITH CORRUPTION. REMOVAL OF THE COMMANDING PRIORITY
ACCORDED FEATAC SHOULD, MOREOVER, EASE PORT AND AIRPORT
FREIGHT CONGESTION.
F. SCRAPPING OF ALBATROSS 1973 CENSUS APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN A SOP TO YOURBAS AND WILL BE WELCOMED BY MANY OTHERS
WHO CHALLENGED THE HONESTY OF THE COUNT. IT SERVES TO CLEAR
THE AIR AND LEAVES NIGERIA WITH THE 1963 CENSUS, IN WHICH
THE HAUSA-FULANI NORTH, WHICH PREDOMINATES IN THE PRESENT
REGIME, ALREADY HAD A MAJORITY POSITION.
G. IN CONTEXT OF THE NEW REGIME'S ACTION-ORIENTATION,
PROPECTIVE APPOINTMENT OF A PANEL TO ADVISE ON THE QUESTION
OF NEW STATES MAY PROMISE SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF THIS MUCH-
DISCUSSED ISSUE. NO COMMITMENT WAS MADE TO CREATE MORE
STATES,
HOWEVER.
H. PLAN TO ESTABLISH A PANEL "TO ADVISE ON QUESTION
OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL" IS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE, AS THIS
WAS PREVIOUSLY NOT UNDER OFFICIAL CONSIDERATION(ALTHOUGH
MUCH TALKED ABOUT BY THOSE EXPOSED TO LAGOS TRAFFIC,
SEWERAGE AND HOUSING PROBLEMS). ITS MENTION NOW
SEEMS TO REFLECT NORTHERN AND MIDDLE-BELT VIEWPOINT.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LAGOS 07367 011736Z

I. UNCERTAIN WHETHER REMOVAL OF "CIVIL" COMMISSIONERS
APPLIES ONLY TO CIVILIANS, BUT EVEN THERE, REMOVAL OF
FESTAC COMMISSIONER ENAHARO AND ABRASIVE-TONGUED INFORMATIONS
COMMISSIONER CLARK WILL EVOKE FEW TEARS.
J. REVIEW OF "POLITICAL PROGRAM" IS NON-COMMITTAL STOP-GAP
THAT COULD COVER QUESTIONS OF IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL POLICY
ON WHICH GOVERNMENT APPEAENTLY FEELS IT SHOULD FOCUS ONE
DAY,AS WELL AS QUESTION OF RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE. THESE
MATTERS APPEAR TO BE FAR FROM FRONT-BURNER, AND WHOLE TONE
OF MOHAMMED'S REMARKS SEEMED TO REFLECT DETERMINATION TO
CLEAN UP WIDE SPECTURM OF DOMESTIC ILLS WITH NO TIMETABLE
FOR COMPLETION YET SET.
K. ESTABLISNEMTN OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATES MAY BE
INTENDED
TO PROVIDE BODY FOR NEW GOVERNORS, WHO ARE NO

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

LONGER REPRESENTED ON SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL. IT
ALSO PROVIDES ADDITIONAL POSITIONS FOR YOUNGER
OFFICERS AGITATING FOR A PIECE OF THE ACTION.
L. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CAME IN AT THE END AS SOMETHING
OF AN AFTERTHOUGT TO REASSURE OTHER NATIONS AND FOREIGN
INVESTORS. IT IS INTERESTING THAT MOHAMMED NEGLECTED TO
MENTION ECOWAS AND DID
NOT MENTION SOUTHERN AFRICA OR
LIBERATION ACTIVITIES, SPECIFICALLY, ALTHOUGH
HE ANNOUNCED ACTIVE SUPPORT OAU.

3. ALL TOGETHER, BRIGADIER MOHAMMED'S TWO SHORT SPEECHES
WERE CLEAR, WELL ORGANIZED AND FORCEFUL. JUDGING FROM
HIS REPUTATION AND THAT OF BRIGADIER OBASANJO, WE EXPECT
NEW REGIME TO BE SOMEWHAT ROUGH AND IMPATIENT IN DEALING

WITH PROBLEMS SUCH AS PORT CONGESTION, LAGOS TRAFFIC, FUEL
SUPPLY, ETC. WHEN MORE RESTRAINED MEASURES ARE NOT
SUFFICIENT, THE LEADERSHIP MAY NOT HESITATE TO TAKE MORE
DRASTIC ACTION, POSSIBLY INCLUDING THE USE OF MILITARY
PERSONNEL AND THE APPLICATION OF FORCE. THIS MAY PRODUCE
INITIAL SUCCESSES, BUT FOR THE LONG HAUL IT IS LIKELY TO
BUILD UP RESENTMENTS, ENCOURAGE POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND
BASIC INSTABILITY IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY AND POLITICS.
FRUSTRATION OVER THE OBJECTIVE DIFFICULTIES OF SOME OF
THE PROBLEMS THEY FACE COULD ENCOURAGE THE REGIME TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 LAGOS 07367 011736Z

LOOK FOR SCAPEGOATS, POSSIBLY AMONG FOREIGN BUSINESS AND
OTHER ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA. WITH THE MODERATING INFLUENCE
OF GENERAL GOWON OUT OF THE WAY, THE ATTITUDES AND FUTURE
COURSE OF THE NIGERNAN GOVERNMENT ARE THUS LIKELY TO BECOME
MORE UNPREDICTABLE AND POSSIBLY MORE ARBITRARY.
CROSBY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, POLICIES, GOVERNMENT REFORM, SPEECHES, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LAGOS07367
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750266-0563
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750891/aaaadchc.tel
Line Count: 207
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LAGOS 7254
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APPRAISAL OF BRIGADIER MOHAMMED'S JULY 30 AND 31 TV APPEARANCES AND HIS INITIAL MOVES AS HEAD
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, NI, (MOHAMMED, MURTALA)
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006